

Message Text

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ACTION DLOS-04

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 FEA-01 ACDA-05 AGR-05 AID-05

CEA-01 CEQ-01 CG-00 CIAE-00 CIEP-01 OFA-01 COME-00

DODE-00 DOTE-00 EB-07 EPA-01 ERDA-05 FMC-01 TRSE-00

H-02 INR-07 INT-05 IO-11 JUSE-00 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05

NSF-01 OES-03 OMB-01 PA-01 PM-04 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

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FM AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2284

INFO AMEMBASSY HELSINKI PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY BONN PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY OSLO PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM PRIORITY

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TAGS: PFOR EFIS LOS PORG XZ UK IC

SUBJ: NORDIC COUNCIL SUPPORTS ICELAND IN COD WAR

SUMMARY: THE PRESIDUM OF THE NEWLY-OPENED NORDIC COUNCIL MEETING ISSUED A STATEMENT SUPPORTING ICELAND IN THE "COD WAR" WITH THE UK. THIS WAS ACCOMPLISHED BY PRESSURE FROM DELEGATES FROM LEFTIST NORDIC PARTIES AS WELL AS THE ICELANDERS THEMSELVES. MANY DELEGATES AND MOST GOVERNMENT LEADERS WERE UNENTHUSIASTIC AND CAREFUL IN EXPRESSING SYMPATHY FOR ICELAND'S PROBLEMS. THE LEADING COPENHAGEN DAILY CHARACTERIZED THE STATEMENT AS A "MOST LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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UNFORTUNATE" BREACH OF NORDIC COUNCIL PRECEDENT.

END SUMMARY.

1. THE FIVE-DAY ANNAUL MEETING IN COPENHAGEN OF THE NORDIC COUNCIL OPENED ITS SESSION ON FEBRUARY 28 WITH AN EMOTIONALLY CHARGED ISSUE: THE COD WAR BETWEEN ICELAND AND THE UNITED KINGDOM. THE NORMALLY RATHER SEDATE AND TECHNICALLY-ORIENTED NORDIC COUNCIL WAS BROUGHT UP SHARPLY WHEN LEFTIST DELEGATES FROM NORWAY AND SWEDEN INTRODUCED A RESOLUTION WHICH CONDEMNED GREAT BRITAIN FOR USING MILITARY ACTIONS IN ICELANDIC WATERS IN ITS DISPUTE WITH ICELAND.

2. THE CUDGEL, IN BEHALF OF THE ICELANDERS, WAS TAKEN UP BY FINN GUSTAVSEN OF NORWAY'S SOCIALIST PEOPLES PARTY, AND LATER BY C.H. HERMANSSON OF SWEDEN'S COMMUNIST PARTY.

3. THE ICELANDERS THEMSELVES ARRIVED LATE IN COPENHAGEN (REPORT-EDLY BECAUSE OF THE GENERAL STRIKE IN ICELAND). AFTER THEIR ARRIVAL AND WHILE THE COUNCIL STAFF PORED OVER PRECEDENTS, WHICH NORMALLY EXCLUDE DEBATE ON GENERAL FOREIGN POLICY QUESTIONS, ICELANDIC DELEGATE RAGNHILDUR HELGADOTTIR MADE A STRONG EMOTIONAL APPEAL IN AN ATTEMPT TO RALLY SUPPORT FOR ICELAND'S VIEW. "THIS IS NOT JUST A FIGHT OF THE ICELANDIC PEOPLE. WE ARE FIGHTING FOR ALL NORDIC COUNTRIES TO PROTECT THE RESOURCES OF THE ATLANTIC OCEAN".

4. HER APPEAL WAS RECEIVED COOLLY BY MUCH OF THE ASSEMBLY AND, ACCORDING TO NEWSPAPER REPORTS, PARTICULARLY THE DANES, THE ONLY MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL PRESENT. PRIME MINISTER ANKER JORGENSEN SAID THAT WHILE HE UNDERSTOOD ICELANDIC MOTIVES, HE MERELY EXPRESSED HOPE THAT THE DISPUTE COULD BE SETTLE BY PEACEFUL MEANS AND REFUSED TO SUPPORT A UNILATERAL CONDEMNATION OF GREAT BRITAIN.

5. NORWEGIAN FOREIGN MINISTER FRYDELUND RECALLED HIS OWN ATTEMPTS TO CONTRIBUTE A SOLUTION TO THE UK-ICELAND DISPUTE AND ADDED THAT "THE CONFLICT IS NOW IN A LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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VISCIOUS CIRCLE AND A SOLUTION IS URGENTLY NEEDED". FINNISH FOREIGN MINISTER SORSA ALSO EXPRESSED SYMPATHY FOR THE PLIGHT OF THE ICELANDERS AND ADDED THAT HE HOPED "SENSE MIGHT PREVAIL BECAUSE THAT IN TIMES OF CRISIS NORDIC SOLIDARITY MUST BE DECISIVE".

6. THE ICELANDIC MEMBERS OF THE NORDIC COUNCIL, HOWEVER, CONTINUED TO PUSH STRONGLY FOR SOME STATEMENT BY THE

COUNCIL AND EMPHASIZED THAT BRITAIN WAS THE ONLY COUNTRY THAT HAD NOT REACHED SOME AGREEMENT WITH ICELAND ON NEW FISHERY AGREEMENTS.

7. ULTIMATELY, A "STATEMENT" WAS ISSUED BY THE PRESIDUM OF THE NORDIC COUNCIL. THE STATEMENT WILL BE ADDRESSED TO NORDIC GOVERNMENTS AND WILL APPEAR IN THE RECORDS OF THE MEETING AS AN ENCLOSURE. THE STATEMENT IS CLOSE TO THE ORIGINAL FORMULATION PROPOSED BY THE NORWEGIAN AND SWEDISH LEFTISTS WITH THE EXCEPTION THAT THIER PROPOSED "REGRET THAT BRITAIN HAD RESORTED TO THE USE OF MILITARY MEASURES" WAS DROPPED.

8. THE TEXT OF THE RESOLUTION FOLLOWS:

"THE NORDIC COUNCIL PRESIDUM NOTES THAT THE NORDIC PEOPLES HAVE FOLLOWED WITH DEEP CONCERN THE CONFLICT WHICH HAS DEVELOPED BETWEEN GREAT BRITAIN AND ICELAND ON FISHERIES WITHIN THE ESTABLISHED 200-NAUTICAL MILE FISHERY ZONE. THE PRESIDUM REALIZES THAT EXPLOITATION OF THE RESOURCES OF THE SEA IS THE BASIS OF EXISTENCE FOR THE BROTHER NATION OF ICELAND AND THAT SPECIAL MEASURES ARE NECESSARY TO ASSURE THAT THESE RESOURCES ARE NOT EXHAUSTED. THE PRESIDUM IS AWARE OF THE FACT THE THE PRESENCE OF BRITISH NAVAL VESSELS IN ICELANDIC WATERS IS AN OBSTACLE TO A PEACEFUL SOLUTION. FOR THIS REASON, THE VESSELS SHOULD BE WITHDRAWN SO THAT THE COUNTRIES INVOLVED MIGHT REACH SUCH A SOLUTION".

9. THE MARCH 1 ISSUE OF BERLINGSKE TIDENDE (INDEPENDENT CONSERVATIVE) EDITORIALY SESCIBED THE PRESIDUM'S STATEMENT AS "MOST UNFORTUNATE". "THE COUNCIL", SAID BERLINGSKE, "HAS ACTED AS THE FOREIGN POLICY SPOKESMAN FOR THE PARLIAMENTARIANS. NO ONE WILL DISTINGUISH LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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BETWEEN THE PRESIDUM AND THE COUNCIL ITSELF. IN SPITE OF SYMPATHY FOR ICELAND, THE NORDIC COUNCIL IS NOT THE PROPER FORUM FOR DISCUSSIONS OF THIS KIND."
DEAN

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